

**Remarks for Stephen L. Johnson  
Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
at the  
Department of Agriculture's 84th Agricultural Outlook Forum  
Arlington, V.A.**

**February 21, 2008**

**Key Message:**

**Agriculture is the producer of environmental AND economic solutions.**

**Thank you, Secretary (Ed) Schafer, for the kind introduction. I am pleased to share the stage with you today, and I look forward to having as strong a working relationship with you as I had with your predecessor.**

**I see today's conference as another opportunity to expand EPA's cooperative relationship with the farming community. You may have noticed that since becoming head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency three years ago, I've given agriculture issues a lot of attention. In fact, I've personally attended more agriculture meetings than any other Administrator in EPA's history. I've met with groups like the American Farm Bureau and the American Soybean Association, and I've spoken with organizations like the South Dakota Corn Growers and the National Pork Producers.**

**During these meetings, I learned more about manure than I ever thought possible. At the same time, the meetings helped me realize that agriculture isn't just the producer of the food for our dinner tables ... agriculture is the producer of environmental AND economic solutions.**

**Often times, when I speak with agricultural groups, I will admit that I didn't grow up in a farming community. As a kid, my idea of raising livestock was breeding a basement full of guinea pigs.**

**However, even a city-kid like me can appreciate that farmers have always been great stewards of our nation's air, water and land. And now, as EPA Administrator, I value our work together to produce the solutions that preserve America's natural resources for future generations of farmers and residents.**

**I want EPA to collaborate with our agriculture partners. By working together, we can understand the practical implications of our actions ... and produce both environmental AND economic solutions for our country.**

**President Bush understands this as well. So when he asked me to become Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, he charged me with accelerating the pace of environmental protection, while maintaining our nation's economic competitiveness. And I see EPA's collaboration with agriculture as a way to meet the President's charge.**

**I am especially excited about the opportunities for collaboration in our efforts to advance renewable energy solutions.**

**Under President Bush's leadership, we are addressing our nation's growing energy demand in a way that supports our goals for a clean environment and a healthy economy. EPA knows the role of the agricultural community is essential in ensuring that America has sufficient supplies of renewable energy, like ethanol and biodiesel.**

**Since 2001, under President Bush's leadership, our nation has funded nearly 12-billion-dollars in developing energy sources that are cleaner, cheaper and more reliable. And just last year, the President announced his "Twenty In Ten" plan, which will reduce U.S. gasoline usage by 20 percent in 10 years – helping strengthen our nation's energy security by jumping off the treadmill of foreign oil dependency.**

**When President Bush signed the Energy Independence and Security Act in December, we gained another tool to help our nation meet its goals for improving energy efficiency, enhancing energy security and reducing emissions of greenhouse gases.**

**The bill represents a significant step forward in reducing our dependence on oil. First, it reduces our demand for oil by increasing fuel economy standards to 35 miles per gallon by 2020 – the first statutory increase in fuel economy standards for automobiles since the CAFE standards were enacted in 1975. Second, it increases the supply of alternative fuel sources. By means of a mandatory Renewable Fuel Standard, or RFS, fuel producers are required to use at least 36 billion gallons of biofuel in 2022.**

**The RFS strengthens our nation's energy security, supports America's farmers, AND helps protect the environment. It is also a classic example of how agriculture can be part of the solution to the major challenges confronting our nation.**

**The RFS in last year's Energy Bill builds on our efforts underway to expand the use of renewable fuels. As you are well aware, the first RFS was launched under the 2005 Energy Policy Act -- requiring fuel producers to use 7-point-5 billion gallons of biofuel by 2012.**

**Through the extensive input from a broad range of stakeholders – including many of you here today – we were able to rapidly and successfully develop the federal regulations formally launched last September.**

**I'm pleased to report that all elements of its implementation are running smoothly – from education outreach, to registration and record-keeping.**

**The first RFS provided a great platform of working collaboratively with our stakeholders to meet our nation's environmental and energy challenges. As EPA and USDA work to implement the 2007 Energy Bill, we intend to pick up where we left off – cooperating with our agricultural partners to produce both environmental and economic solutions.**

**But with all the excitement surrounding renewable fuels, I don't want to overlook another opportunity that exists for EPA to team up with our partners in agriculture to protect the environment by harnessing alternative energy – the AgSTAR program.**

**Co-sponsored by EPA, USDA and the U.S. Department of Energy, AgSTAR encourages the use of methane recovery technologies, or biogas, at both dairy and swine farms.**

**By capturing and utilizing what would otherwise be wasted methane emissions, a new source of clean, reliable, inexpensive energy is realized. At the same time, enormous benefits to public health and the environment occur. And farmers can increase their incomes by using biogas for on-site electricity generation or delivery to a local electric utility.**

**With the help of AgSTAR, livestock waste management systems have reduced methane by about 1-point-5 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent ... and provided enough renewable energy to power the equivalent of over 20-thousand average American homes, each year. I encourage you to visit the AgSTAR exhibit at this forum, and learn more about this successful program.**

**Under President Bush's leadership, EPA is addressing our nation's growing energy demand in a way that supports our goals for a clean environment and a healthy economy. And I want to thank our partners in the agriculture community who have helped bring the many benefits of the RFS program to the American people.**

**We at EPA appreciate that agriculture isn't just the producer of the food ... agriculture is the producer of environmental AND economic solutions. As we continue to develop the partnerships that produce solutions, together we are doing what's good for agriculture, good for our environment, and good for the American people.**

**Thank you, and I wish you much success for the remainder of this conference.**